



BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

## A PROCLAMATION

### REENTRY AWARENESS MONTH

- WHEREAS: More than 2.6 million people have criminal records on file with the Georgia Crime Information Center. Returning to the community after time in prison is a difficult transition, and an effective reentry process is integral to providing those in Georgia's corrections system with new opportunities for success; and
- WHEREAS: At least 95 percent of state prisoners will be released back into their communities. However, even when one has completed a prison term, negative stigmas associated with having a criminal record often present obstacles in finding meaningful employment and prove difficult in navigating other areas of life; and
- WHEREAS: Returning citizens depend on the support of their communities when transitioning back into their homes and rejoining the workforce. Approximately 40 percent of offenders return to state prison within three years of their release, making it imperative that the men and women reentering society receive the help and encouragement they need to make positive contributions and good decisions to avoid recidivism and reclaim their lives; and
- WHEREAS: Reentry, when fully implemented, empowers returning citizens to refrain from crime and incentivizes law-abiding behavior. As a part of the Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative, coordinators work with inmates in the months leading up to their release to assess their needs while creating a specialized reentry plan for use by Community Supervision Officers; and
- WHEREAS: Effective reentry initiatives offer returning citizens a voice while providing them with the means to build a better life for the future. Stigmas associated with one's criminal record are being replaced with compassion and kindness from the community, and hope for a brighter future; and
- WHEREAS: In recent years, Georgia has become the model for criminal justice reform across the nation and has been highlighted as one of the eight states with declining recidivism rates. I encourage Georgians to join in supporting our returning citizens; now
- THEREFORE: I, NATHAN DEAL, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim July 2017 as REENTRY AWARENESS MONTH in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May in the year of our Lord two thousand seventeen.



*Nathan Deal*

GOVERNOR

ATTEST

*Chris W. Riley*

CHIEF OF STAFF